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SUBJECT: SPECIAL TRIBUNAL FOR LEBANON MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING, MARCH 20

REF: STATE 22576

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Special Tribunal for Lebanon Management Committee met March 20 and agreed to a one-time increase in the base salary of judges. The Management Committee also discussed and solicited more information on a request by the President of the Tribunal for appointment of the Vice President of the Tribunal to be effective June 1, 2009, and not in 2010, as previously budgeted. Several other issues were raised under other business. No date was set for the next meeting. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) At its March 20 meeting, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon Management Committee agreed to a one-time adjustment of the base salary of judges to USD 161,681. Any future increases will be specifically subject to Management Committee review. The U.S. joined consensus based on the guidance in reftel.

¶3. (SBU) The President of the Tribunal, an international judge, asked the UN Secretary General to accelerate the appointment of the Vice President of the Tribunal, a Lebanese judge, to June 1, 2009, so that the President can benefit from the "national perspectives" he will provide in discussions of "emerging legal, policy, and practical issues." Before responding to the Tribunal's President, the Secretary-General asked the Secretariat to solicit input from the Management Committee. During the Management Committee's discussion of the matter, PolOff asked that the Management Committee be provided with (1) further clarification on how this early activation of a third judicial position (budget provides for two judicial positions) will play into the broader picture, given that the investigation is anticipated to continue into 2010 and (2) what are the precise budget ramifications and how will the additional costs be met from extra-budgetary resources. (Comment: Additional financial resources are now available, given the recent USD 8 million transfer from the Lebanese government for year one. End comment.) The Registry provided an initial estimate of USD 200,000 for an installation grant for the judge and spouse plus seven months salary. The Canadian representative asked if there were any alternatives, such as occasional working visits to the Tribunal by the Vice President so that he does not need to be employed full-time. The French representative noted that at one point the Management Committee had been prepared to move all four Lebanese judges to The Hague, even before the start of a trial, for security reasons.

¶4. (SBU) In response to a letter from the Prosecutor, the Management Committee agreed that it would not revisit its decision on the terms and conditions of the Prosecutor's employment, but that the Chair would draft a short letter explaining the Management Committee's preference for maintaining a single channel of correspondence with the Tribunal through the Registrar.

¶5. (SBU) Under any other business, several items were raised:

-- Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs Peter Taksoe-Jensen swore in all of the judges and the Prosecutor on March 9, at the start of the plenary. He also appointed and swore in the head of the defense office, French national Francois Roux, and the Registrar. The plenary should conclude March 20 and then the rules of procedure and detention rules will be adopted and distributed to Management Committee members.

-- Canada has approved another donation of 3 million Canadian dollars for year one funding which will be used for IT and other contracted projects.

-- The Netherlands representative voiced concern that one of the Lebanese judges is not satisfied with the apartments leased by the Tribunal for their use and on which the Dutch government had completed security upgrades. The Management Committee, at the Lebanese representative's suggestion, asked that the Registrar and a Dutch government representative review with the Lebanese judge the security requirements that were taken into consideration for the selection of the apartments and the financial costs of the security upgrades. The OLA representative reminded the Management Committee that the judges' letters of appointment did contain a paragraph on the need to adhere to the security guidelines of the Dutch and Lebanese governments and the UN's Department of Safety and Security (DSS).

Wolff